

Ctenitis vellea, a Neglected West Indian Fern

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In his "A monograph of the genus *Dryopteris*,"¹ Christensen discusses briefly a rare West Indian fern first named *Aspidium velleum* by Willdenow in 1810. He states that the species "was founded on PLUMIER tab. 9, which plate illustrates a plant from San Domingo," and goes on to say that Hooker's *Nephrodium aureovestitum*, described in 1862 from Cuban material (*Linden* no. 1901) probably represents the same entity. However, he says that the only specimen he had seen was a single sheet collected by Jenman in Jamaica, now deposited at the U. S. National Herbarium.

G. S. Jenman, a nineteenth-century specialist on Jamaican ferns, who published (in serial form) the first (and, to date, the last) comprehensive work on these plants,² states that the species is "common" in the region of the Manchester Mountains, at 2000 ft. elevation. However, the only specimen in the herbarium of the Jamaican Department of Agriculture (with which Jenman was connected, 1873-1879) is labeled as being from a cultivated plant at Castleton Gardens. Apparently William R. Maxon, who contributed so much to our knowledge of Jamaican ferns, never collected this species, though he visited localities where it occurs. However, he was acquainted with it from a number of old collections at the British Museum. My own attention was brought to this plant during the early part of March of this year, when, during the course of botanical collecting in the remote interior of the so-called "cockpit country" of southern Trelawny Parish, I was interested to find the species in question quite common there, growing in scattered colonies on shaded rocky hillsides, and a good series of specimens was obtained.

¹ Vid. Selsk. Skr. VII. 10²: 101. 1913.

² Bull. Bot. Dept. Jamaica, 1890-1898.